

EGREMONT GREEN COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES Nov. 11, 2020

Members present: Emily Eyre (co-chair), Pat Konecky (co-chair), Marj Wexler, Corinna Barnard

Also present: Barbara Kalish, Suzanne Gebelein, David Rejesky

Pat opened the meeting via Zoom at 4:02 with introductions.

Rain Barrel project: Suzanne Gebelein, with the Great American Rain Barrel Company (GARB) of Hyde Park, Massachusetts, spoke about the process of purchasing, installing and maintaining the barrels from a vendor's perspective. GARB has a contract with the state of Massachusetts to provide the barrels in order to encourage towns to invest in or support water conservation with rain barrels at a reasonable cost. Barrels are repurposed from GARB's food importing business. They are BPA-free, food-grade and inhibit algae formation. More specs below:

- 1) Available in four colors – black, green, brown, gray
- 2) Shipment costs are either \$12 per barrel or \$90 for pallet of eight; orders should be placed in units of eight
- 3) Allow six weeks for delivery
- 4) Capacity of the barrels – 60 gallons
- 5) Weight empty – 20 pounds
- 6) Kit comes with all accessories – spouts, diverter and connections. (See GARB website for illustrations of all).
- 7) Largest community purchase to date is 700 barrels for a single town. In some cases, small towns have grouped together to purchase rain barrels. One such order was 90 barrels

Dave Rejeski, an Egremont resident who has purchased and installed three barrels on his property, offered a homeowner's perspective. Rain barrels, he said, are not for everyone. It depends on your gray (non-potable) water needs and ability to install and maintain the barrels. The barrels can be connected in a series to collect more water. After a year there can be a significant savings if you are connected to town water, and if you have a well, there can be less stress on your water supply. 15,000 gallons of water can be collected in an average rainfall from a 1000-square-foot roof.

Installation, is not complicated. The only tool required is a hacksaw (see GARB website for more). Installation can be accomplished by the homeowner or a handyperson. It was agreed that the Green Committee will develop a list of potential installers. Barrels must be removed and kept dry in the winter. Winterization involves moving the barrel and shutting off the diverter. It was agreed that a pilot program, or Phase 1, should be followed by a larger Phase 2 with more barrels.

Phase 1: 8-16 barrels

Town purchases between 8 and 16 barrels based on resident commitment and provides the barrels at the Town Hall campus for pick-up by residents. This would be monitored by the Rain Barrel Committee (RBC).

Phase 2: More than 32 barrels

Homeowners purchase directly from GARB, which manages and tracks the orders and delivers to Town Hall for distribution by the RBC as in Phase 1. RBC reaches out to neighboring towns to either join our program or start one of their own.

Delivery options: Orders of fewer than 2 barrels are delivered by a trucking service.

More than 32 barrels are delivered by GARB.

The target rollout for Phase I is April 2021. Publicity will be based on material provided by GARB and subject to the approval of the Green Committee and the Select Board. RBC will develop promotional material, with the possible involvement of newspapers, a phone-a-thon, websites, social media, word of mouth and posters.

Next Steps: Green Committee to ask the Select Board to put the project on its agenda for approval consideration.

Minutes of the October meeting were approved.

Old Business:

Archived Egremont Green Committee minutes: These are now on Town server, thanks to Marj.

Vehicles idling at North Egremont store – Emily put out an advisory, did not receive any responses.

October Plastic Challenge 1-year follow-up: Pat said a few emails had come in. Emily noted that she had bought a Terracycle box in order to recycle materials such as coffee bags and frozen-vegetable packaging.

Zoom account created Emily said the committee now has its own account, for the next 12 months.

Annual holiday gifts Marj has purchased two hand puppets for 4-year-old boy. She will accept \$5 from each committee member to cover the cost.

Municipal Vulnerability Program Emily said this still formative committee had been contacted about applying for two grants, one for planning for climate mitigation and the second to pay for climate mitigation expenses. Greenagers' Will Conklin heads the committee. A preliminary Zoom meeting had been held the previous day and the program will tap a few more members. The first step is to apply for the planning grant and then prioritize the Town's climate-mitigation needs. Dozens of towns around state have been creating plans. Sheffield's plan is water related. Companies are hired to complete the report. Applications will be completed in the spring for the first grants. Marj noted that the Rain Barrel project could fit in with the municipal vulnerability program. Emily noted that Road-Stream crossing data is available to help the Municipal Vulnerability program make assessments.

Other Business: The committee agreed to not set any future meetings on legal holidays.

The next meeting will be on Dec. 9 at 4pm

The meeting adjourned at 5:10.

Respectfully submitted,

Corinna Barnard